

(c) whether the Government propose to bring uniformity in the retirement age; and

(d) if so, the steps taken so far in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) to (d). All Class-I officers appointed on or after 1.9.1956, i.e. the date of nationalisation of the life insurance business, retire at the age of 58. However, the Class-I officers of the erstwhile companies who were inducted into the LIC after their nationalisation including those who became officers after nationalisation, have been treated as a distinct group and their retirement age has been kept at 60 years as per terms of their employment at the time of their joining the service. There is thus uniformity in the retirement age in each of these two groups, and there is no proposal under consideration to change the pattern of the retirement age for the Class-I officers of the LIC.

Import of Synthetic Thread

6879. SHRI HARI KEWAL PRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of synthetic thread imported during the last three years;

(b) the amount of foreign exchange spent thereon;

(c) whether the Government propose to import synthetic threads in future also; and

(d) if so, the reasons thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) to (d). In terms of the Export and Import Policy, 1992-97, import of synthetic thread like all other items, is

not covered by the Negative List, and is freely allowed. This has been done in order to ensure easy availability of imported raw materials, with a view to improving the quality of Indian products and making them internationally more competitive.

Statistical data in respect of import of various items for the period 1988-89, 1989-90 and 1990-91 is constrained in the Monthly Statistics of Foreign Trade of India, Vol. II-Imports, published by the Director General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics, copies of which are available in the Parliament Library.

Trade with Spain

6880. SRI ANKUSHRAO RAOSAHED TOPE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Business Mission from Spain has shown its willingness to increase trade with India in view of the recent economic liberalisation policy introduced by the Union Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) to (c). A Spanish Delegation had visited India in November, 1991 and had meeting with apex Industry Associations in Delhi and Bombay. Possibilities for Joint Ventures and technology transfer in areas such as food products, electrical appliances and automobile components besides, export of granite, marble and cement from India to Spain were envisaged during these interactions.

Government endeavours to promote commercial and industrial cooperation